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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D. C. 20505

ALERT MEMORANDUM

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MEMORANDUM FOR: National Security Council

SUBJECT: Possible Hostilities Between Egypt and Libya (C)

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Tension along the border has been
heightened [REDACTED] and has
increased the chances that war will break out either by deliberate
attack or by unpremeditated escalation of border incidents. Such a
war would have serious adverse consequences.

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[REDACTED]
STANSFIELD TURNER

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Attachment

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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

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National Intelligence Officers

29 March 1979

ALERT MEMORANDUM*

POSSIBLE HOSTILITIES BETWEEN EGYPT AND LIBYA (C)

[redacted] Egypt and Libya have been augmenting their forces along their common border [redacted]

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This heightened tension along the border increases the likelihood that war will break out there either by deliberate attack or by unpremeditated escalation of border incidents (as occurred in July 1977). A provocation by one side could be seized on by the other as an excuse to begin military operations. [redacted]

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A conflict between Libya and Egypt at this time could have serious adverse consequences:

- Unless there were convincing evidence that Libya had provoked the conflict, suspicions would be raised among Arabs and probably others that the US (and perhaps Israel) had sanctioned Egyptian military moves against Libya.

**The Alert Memorandum is an interagency publication issued by the Director of Central Intelligence on behalf of the Intelligence Community. Its purpose is to ensure that senior policymakers are aware of the serious implications for US interests of impending potential developments. It is not a prediction that these developments will occur. This memorandum has been coordinated at the working level by CIA, DIA, and NSA.*

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- Most of the Arabs would feel compelled to condemn Egypt, thus diminishing further the prospects of gaining the cooperation of Arab moderates in peace negotiations and the prospects of blunting implementation of sanctions against Egypt.
- Hostilities that were not brought on by a major Libyan provocation would be unpopular with Egyptians thereby increasing popular apprehensions about Egypt's isolation in the Arab world and energizing Sadat's domestic opponents.

-- The Soviet Union might

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- It might prompt other Arabs--probably Syria and Iraq--to send troops to Libya in a show of solidarity.

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